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NEWS ADVISORY

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Contact: Missouri River Joint Information Center
MRJIC@usace.army.mil
402-996-3877

Missouri River reservoirs out of exclusive flood control zone

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. (Aug. 17, 2011) — The Fort Randall reservoir pool level reached 1365 feet at 5 a.m. today and officially brought all the Missouri River reservoirs out of the exclusive flood control zone.

The exclusive flood control zone is the top 6 percent of storage available in the reservoir system. It holds 4.7 million acre feet of water. The Fort Randall reservoir represents 985,000 acre feet of that total.

"This is a milestone in this flood fight," said Jody Farhat, chief, Missouri River Basin Water Management Division. "There is still a way to go before this is over. Our goal has always been to evacuate all the flood control storage before the 2012 runoff season begins and we are on our way to achieving that."

The northernmost reservoir, Fort Peck, Mont., was the first to exit the exclusive flood control zone (it holds 971,000 acre feet of water) on Aug. 4. The Oahe reservoir, located in Pierre, S.D., exited the zone on Aug. 7 (1.1 MAF of water) and Garrison, Riverdale, N.D., exited the zone on Aug. 8 (1.5 MAF of water).

Total system storage was 66.3 MAF today. The annual pool level of 56.8 MAF needs to be reached before March 1, 2012. That pool level will provide 16.3 MAF of flood control storage for 2012 runoff.

"This is great news for the basin," said Col. Robert Ruch, Omaha District commander. "But this flood fight isn't over yet. There is still high water on the levees and in the floodplain and while this is the first step towards decreasing the water level, we need to stay vigilant under the water recedes."

Releases from Fort Peck are currently at 25,000 cfs and will stay at that level until the first week of September and then will decrease to 20,000 cfs. Fort Peck is expected to reach a release rate of 9,000 cfs at the end of September.

Releases from Garrison Dam are at 85,000 cfs. They will remain steady for about week and will begin to decrease by 5,000 cfs every day until reaching 30,000 cfs by late-September. Release rates at the end of September are expected to be 25,000 cfs.

Releases from Oahe Dam are at 130,000 cfs and will begin to decrease by 5,000 cfs a day at the end of the week until reaching 80,000 cfs at the end of August. Releases are expected to be 30,000 cfs at the end of September.

Releases from Big Bend Dam are at 130,000 cfs and will begin to decrease by 5,000 cfs at the end of the week until reaching 80,000 cfs at the end of August. Releases are expected to be 30,000 cfs at the end of September.

Releases from Fort Randall are at 148,000 cfs and will begin decreasing by 5,000 cfs on Aug. 18 until reaching 87,000 cfs at the end of August. Releases are expected to be 38,000 cfs at the end of September.

Releases from Gavins Point are at 150,000 and will begin decreasing by 5,000 cfs at the end of the week until reaching 90,000 cfs at the end of August. Releases are expected to be 40,000 cfs at the end of September.

All dates and release levels provided are best approximations, based on current forecast conditions and the best available information at the time. Adjustments may be necessary if conditions change. To view the three week release forecast for the main stem dams, go to: http://www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc/reports/twout.html.

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